

Appl. No. 10/645,112  
Amdt. Date: 12/31/04  
Reply to Office Action of July 1, 2004

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

This response is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action mailed July 1, 2004 in the above-captioned application.

#### **Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102:**

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Pallini, Jr. et al. (US6,422,791). Reconsideration is respectfully requested. It is believed that claims 1 and 2 are patentably distinguishable over the cited reference for the reasons hereinafter set forth.

An anticipating reference must disclose each and every element of the claimed invention. Pallini, Jr. et al., however, fails to teach, show or suggest the claimed structure recited in claims 1 and 2. Pallini, Jr. et al. fails to teach, show or suggest a keel centralizer having a flat keel centralizer body including a circumferential flange for mounting a bearing ring thereon, and wherein the bearing ring includes a radiused profile defining a peripheral contact surface of the keel centralizer. Pallini, Jr. et al. discloses a riser to sleeve attachment that includes (in one embodiment) a disk 31 as shown in Figs. 3 and 5. The disk 31 is not a keel centralizer nor does it function as a keel centralizer. The disk 31 is connecting member between the outer sleeve 12 and the small diameter ring 22 mounted on the riser pipe 14. The surface 32 of the disk 31 does not define a bearing ring nor does it define a radiused contact surface as recited in Applicant's claim 2. It is believed therefore that the rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is not proper and it is respectfully requested that it be withdrawn.

Appl. No. 10/645,112  
Amdt. Date: 12/31/04  
Reply to Office Action of July 1, 2004

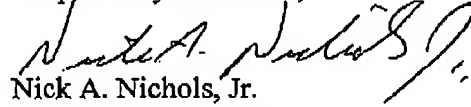
Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pallini, Jr. et al. in view of Cannon and claims 5-8 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pallini, Jr. et al. in view of Knight et al. For the reasons set forth above, it is believed that Pallini, Jr. et al. fails to teach, show or suggest the Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 1 and 2 in the application, which claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Consequently, claims 3-8 which depend therefrom are also in condition for allowance.

The citation of the prior art made of record and not relied upon is noted. However, it is believed that the prior art not relied upon is no more pertinent than the applied references, and therefore a detailed discussion of the prior art not relied upon is not deemed necessary for a full and complete response to the outstanding office action.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Nick A. Nichols, Jr.  
Attorney for Applicant  
Registration No. 29,573

Nick A. Nichols, Jr., P.C.  
P. O. Box 16399  
Sugar Land, TX 77496-6399  
281-494-8331